

The Christian Commonwealth

Tests of Character.

A great many admirable actions are overlooked by us because they are so little and common. Take, for instance, the mother who has had a broken shudder, if any at all, with the nursing babe, whose wants must not be disregarded; she would fain sleep a while when the breakfast-hour comes, but patiently and uncomplainingly she takes her timely seat at the table. Though exhausted and weary, she serves them all with a refreshing cup of coffee or tea before she slips it herself, and often the cup is handed back to her to be refilled before she has had time to taste her own. Do you hear her complain—this weary mother—that her breakfast is cold before she has time to eat it? And this not for one, but for every morning, perhaps, in the year. Do you call this a small thing? Try it and see. O how does woman shame us by her forbearance and fortitude in what are called little things! Ah, it is these little things which are tests of character; it is by these little self-denials borne with such a self-for gotten gentleness, that the humblest home is made beautiful as the eyes of angels, though we but sit in it, and until the chair is vacated, and the hand which kept in motion all this domestic machinery is pow—ed and cold!

A Mother's Influence.

A college student, not a professor of religion, was accustomed to kneel down and pray before retiring to bed. His room-mate, who was prayerless and profane, speaking of it said:

"It's on account of a promise he has made to his mother, I suppose."

Of his room-mate's praying, he spoke thus sincerely, but his conjecture was probably correct.

Happy are those sons whose mothers teach them to pray, and whose influence over them on account of a pious example is so powerful that they are constrained to do as they have been taught.

The young man who was not ashamed to pray, even in the presence of his irreligious room-mate, has been for years a member of the Presbyterian church, was joined in marriage to a pious lady, and fills with honor a high station connected with one of our State governments.

The other who made light of a mother's holy teachings, was a young man of talent and a good scholar, but after leaving college he failed to occupy a prominent position among men. He died a few years ago, probably as he had lived, a scroffer.

To a pious mother's influence many of our best men trace their elevation in the world.

Not Seeking to be "Edified."

It is, I think, a matter for very deep regret that this is not an age in which Christian people want to be edified. It is an age in which they like to have their ears tickled, and delight to have a multiplicity of anecdotes and of exciting matter, but they little care to be well instructed in the sound and solid doctrines of the grace of God. In the old Puritan times sermons must have been tiresome to the thoughtless, but now-a-days I should think they are more tiresome to the thoughtful. The Christian of those days wanted to know a great deal of the things of God; and professed that the preacher could open up some point of Christian practice to make him holier and wiser, he was well satisfied, though the man might be no orator, and might lead him into no fields of novel speculation. Christians then did not want a new faith, but, having received the old faith, they wished to be well rooted and grounded in it, and therefore sought daily for illumination, as well as for quickening; they desired not only to have the emotions excited, but also to have the intellect richly stored with divine truth; and them must be much of this in every church, if it is built up.

Spurgeon.

Jesus Praying.
If it was necessary for the sinless Jesus to spend whole nights in prayer, how much greater is the necessity in our case? What a silent rebuke is there in the example of Jesus, for those Christians who never or seldom pray. Jesus was perfectly, free from sin, he never knew the burden of a guilty conscience. There was a delightful harmony between his will and that of the Father. No sinful thought ever stained the pure mirror of his soul. Yet it was necessary for him to pray. It was his habit to spend much time in prayer. He went apart from the people in order to hold communion with his Father in heaven. The Father as his closet.

It is time to pass in those days into a mountain to pray, and remained all night in prayer. The midnight air was the bower of his prayer.

Jesus praying! All night in prayer! Let the prayerless Christian come here and learn a lesson from his Master. If it was necessary for Jesus to go to his Father for strength, how can we hope to succeed if we neglect to pray? We are surrounded by powerful spiritual enemies, temptations arise at every hand, our own hearts are like tinder waiting for the spark to set them on fire; our own consciences condemn us, and oftentimes we would rather get away from God than enter into his presence. Is there not an absolute necessity for prayer? If Jesus could not live without prayer, neither can we. Prayer is a duty and a privilege, but a necessity as well. Prayer is the breath of the Christian life; we cease to live when we cease to pray. Prayer opens heaven and brings down blessings upon our souls. "Pray moves the arm that moves the world."

Jesus praying! Can you be his disciple if you have no closet? You cannot plead the excuse of the three disciples, they slept for sorrow; your sleep arises from sinful negligence. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation."

Two Pictures of Death.

In a scantly furnished chamber lies an old Scotch minister with gray hair and wrinkled skin. But his brow is high and broad; his deep-set eyes are bright and piercing; a smile plays round his lips and, though feeble and dying, he looks calm and happy. Let us speak to him and say:

"Do you think yourself dying, dear sir?"

He fixes his eyes calmly upon you, and slowly replies:

"Really, friend, I am not anxious whether I am or not; for if I die, I shall be with God; if I live I will be with me."

Now let us step into yonder mansion. Entering a richly furnished chamber, we find a dignified personage enfolded in warm robes and seated in a large easy chair. He, too, is feeble and dying; but he looks like a man ill at ease with himself. Let us also ask him a question:

"Mr. Gibbons, how does the world seem to you now?"

The eloquent historian of the Roman Empire—for he it is—closes his eyes for a moment, then opens them again and with a deep sigh replies:

"All things are fleeting. When I look back I see they have been fleeting; when I look forward, all is dark and doubtful."—*Protestant Churchman.*

A Few Words to a Father.

Take your son for a companion whenever you conveniently can; it will relieve the already overburdened anxious mother of so much care. It will gratify the boy; it will please the mother; it certainly ought to be a pleasure to you. What might your eye would not brighten when her child is fondly cared for? And when his eyelashes, his heart beats, and his tongue prattles faster and faster with the idea of going with father, then she not share her little boy's happiness, and is not her love deepened by her husband's consideration, so just, and yet too often so extraordinary? It will keep him and you on places, society, and temptation into which separately you might enter.

It will establish confidence in you,

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The father cried, "Oh, what shall I do to save my poor boy?" He did not care about his goods; his dear son was all he thought about. He made his way to that part of the house, and met the maid flying from the flames. "Where is Charles?" cried the father. "He is in his room," said the girl. In her alarm she had come away, and forgot to bring the child with her. And now the stairs were in flames.

The wind blew on the fire, and made it burn wildly. The doors and the roof were all red and burning.

In a short time all was seen in the window. "Oh father," he cried, "how shall I get out?" He could be seen by the fire in the room, but the thick black smoke kept him from seeing the people below. But he heard their voices, and he cried, "Oh, save me!"

"Here I am, my son," said the father, and he held out his arms for Charles to jump into them. "Here I am; don't fear. Drop down, and I will be sure to catch you."

Charles crept out of the window, but hung fast by it. He knew it was very high from the ground, and he was afraid to let go.

"Drop down, my dear boy," cried the father.

"Oh, I can't see you, my dear, dear father!"

"But I am here. You can trust me; I will save you."

"I am afraid, father, I shall fall."

"Let go, and don't fear," cried the father; "your father will be sure to catch you."

And now Charles felt the flames. He was certain that if he hung there he should be burnt. He knew that his father was strong, that he loved him, and that he was waiting to save him. Then he drew in his breath, let go his hold, and in a moment he was in his father's arms. Charles was saved from the fire, and there was great joy among all the people who saw the sight.

As you read this true story, did you not see how great was the danger of little Charles? There was only one way for him to be saved from the fire. He could not see his father, but he heard his voice. He knew that his father loved him, and wished to save him. Then he felt quite sure that his father would save him. So he fell into his arms and was saved.

Do you not know that every child is in danger of being lost forever? It is the loss of both soul and body. And why? Sin has brought us into danger. How glad we should be that there is a way made known to us in the Bible in which we can be saved! Jesus saw our sad state, and he came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost." And to save us he died on the cross. But now he is in heaven. Though we cannot see him, he sees us. And in his holy word he says that he is able and willing to save all who go to him by faith. It is as if his arms were wide open, as the arms of the father were when Charles fell into them. He tells us to come to him, and be happy. He waits to save us. He speaks to you now: will you not hear his voice, and trust and love him?

Richard Coid.

Simeon on Transubstantiation.

One of the papers publishes from "Recollections of Simeon," the following anecdote, which bears hard upon the folly of transubstantiation:

"When Wolsey and Erasmus disputed on this point (an essential change in the elements,) Wolsey said to Erasmus at parting, 'Well, only believe that it is so, and it will be so.' Erasmus, on leaving England, borrowed Wolsey's patry to take him to the ship; but, instead of returning it, carried the animal off with him to the Continent, and sent this answer on paper:

Quid nihil disti de corpore Christi
Credere quid est, et credere.

Sicut quid latet, et latet?

Which may be thus paraphrased in English:

If wine and bread, mere human food,

Becomes the Saviour's flesh and blood,

When I eat with receive it;

Then faith for you as much may do,

And your best judge is safe with you,

If you will but believe it.

Was not this girl quite right?

The wonders of his love

No human words can tell,

Which brought the Saviour from a above,

To save our soul from hell.

Lord Jesus, grant that we

May know thy saving grace;

Live while on earth to honor thee;

And in heaven see thy face.

The prosperous man who yields himself up to temptation bids farewell to welfare.

Of all earthly music that which reaches fartherest into heaven is the beating of a loving heart.

For the Children.

My Saviour.

Oh, what has Jesus done for me?

He pitied me—my Saviour.

My sins were great—His love was free—

He died for me—my Saviour.

He pleads for me—my Saviour.

A heavenly mansion He'll provide

For all who love the Saviour.

Jesus—dear Jesus—

Thy name is sweet, my Saviour—

When shall I see Thee face to face?

My wondrous—blessed Saviour!

To my weak steps He doth give heed,

He watcheth me—my Saviour.

He helpeth me in every need,

He loveth me—my Saviour.

He keeps me—my Saviour.

To my poor steps He doth give aid,

To my poor steps He doth give

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We send this week and shall continue
to do so from time to time, specimen
numbers of our paper. Those to whom
they are thus sent will understand that
they are requested to subscribe for the
paper should they feel so disposed.

We have no agents soliciting subscribers,
and take this method of making them ac-
quainted with the paper.

Christianity modestly claiming simple
toleration in the Church.

The Protestant Clergyman says.—
"We recognize the fact that Evangel-
ical men are in a decided, perhaps
hopeless, minority in the Episcopal
Church. If our principles and con-
ventions permitted, it certainly would
not be our policy to institute judicial
proceedings against Ritualistic offend-
ers. The attempt would only end in
humble failure, if it did not inevitably
exceed us from the Church. All that
we claim is toleration."

Of all the keen satire perpetrated
upon the Modern Episcopal Church, this
is certainly the keenest. And it is
not only keen but two-edged. On
the one hand how irresistibly comes
the humble claim that a church which
not only tolerates, but *permits*, the infid-
ility of the "Essay and Review" class
on one extreme and the Chinese ton-
fooleries of St. Albans at the other,
should tolerate a little Christianity
also. On the other hand how indi-
cious the position of the evangelical
petitioners for violation—laboring
with untiring zeal to gather lost sin-
ners into a body wherein the most
that can be promised is that Christ
and his salvation shall, for the present
at least, be *tolerated*, in it! And yet
in its last analysis, wherein does that
singular position of evangelical Epis-
copalians differ from that of those
among us who under plea of clinging
to the church of their fathers' labor
to bring men into an apostate church
though they had no function as
true bearers to the truth.

Encouraging Prospects in the Imp-
enetrated Churches of the South-west,
and the Importance of Sustaining
them.

A private letter from a friend in
the South-west says:

That you and the other brethren in
Kentucky have the power and disposition
to afford such generous assistance
to our struggling churches is a very
fortunate thing; otherwise many of them
would have to be abandoned, and the
baptism of Mississippi. This was once the
largest and wealthiest Presbytery in the
South-west. We could minister at our
late meeting only eight ministers. Only
one church in the Presbytery is self sup-
porting—the church in Natchez. Many
of our congregations enjoy the means
of grace only occasionally and at wide
intervals. And yet pastor and stated sup-
porters are not encouraging religious
interest among their people. In
many instances the loss of temporal
goods, and perhaps political disappoint-
ments, have wrought in one people a
humility, a sense of their dependence on
God, a moderation in their desires, for
which they were not noted in more pros-
perous times. Since I have been con-
nected with this church, I do not think
I have ever known a more healthy state
of religious feeling than now prevails.

A Few Words from China.—The
Missionary, the organ of our Foreign
Missionary Committee, states that a
sum of \$1,000 has been received from Mr. In-
see, as late as the 1st of January. His
family was well at that time; and he
was busily engaged in getting his house
ready for the cold weather, and for the
accommodation of other missionaries, who he hoped, would come out and join him.
He had opened his chapel for public
worship and had good audiences
of Chinese. The members of the church
he had hung out his sign, "The Chinese
Missionary." The Chinese girls, and
probably, before this time he had
opened another for boys. In relation to
a printing press, he greatly needs
me: "I do wish that some friend
or friends would send me a *self-feeding*
press, which would be very useful here, and
I understand the working of a press.
May we not hope, that some one will re-
spond to this request, and thus enlarge
the sphere of this good brother's usefulness?"—*Chris. Observer.*

We do not easily discover our faults;
the clearest eyes do not see the checks
below, nor the brow above.

The Free Christian Commonwealth
The Presbytery of Louisville

Met in Owensboro, Ky., April 8, ult.,
at 7 o'clock P. M., and was opened
by a sermon by Rev. J. N. Samiders,
being the Inter Moderator present, from
the text, I. John, iii, 18.

After Samiders, the Presbytery was con-
stituted with prayer by Rev. J. N. Samiders.

Rev. W. W. Duncan was elected Mod-
erator, and Rev. R. E. B. Temporary
Clerk.

Rev. L. N. Canfield, was dismissed to
unite with the Presbytery of Nashville,
Prof. Philip H. Thompson, after the
usual examination was received from the
Presbytery of Memphis.

The Church in Big Bend was dissolved
and Dr. A. Penny was authorized to give
certificates of membership, or letters of
dismissal to the members of the church
to such churches as they may prefer to go
to, and then to report himself to the ses-
sion of the 2nd Church of Louisville.
Rev. P. H. Thompson was allowed to
supply the Portland Academy, and, for
six months; also, Rev. W. W. Duncan
the Methodist Church for the same time;
also Rev. J. A. Almuth, the Penn Run
Church, for half his time, and Came Run
and Plum Creek church one fourth of his
time also Rev. L. P. Yandell, the
Walnut Street Church; all these supplies
for six months.

Each minister in our bounds, was di-
rected to preach at least one Sabbath be-
tween this and the next stated meeting of
the Presbytery, in his respective place.

Shelbyville, chosen as the place,
and the 1st Wednesday in August, at
Stockport, P. M., as the time of the next
stated meeting of Presbytery.

The name of Rev. S. Williams, was
dropped from the roll, inasmuch as he
had renounced our jurisdiction and joined
another body.

The thanks of the Presbytery were
extended to the citizens of Owensboro for
their munificence and hospitality, and to
the Lewis and Henderson Mail line for
the reduction of fare to members of Pres-
bytery.

Adjoined, closed with prayer by
Rev. P. H. Thompson.

ROBERT MUNSON,
Stated Clerk.

Meeting of West Lexington Presby-
tery.

The Presbytery met in Midway on the
14th inst., and after a plain and bar-
monious session, adjourned to meet in
Mount Sterling on Friday at 7 o'clock
P. M. before the 2nd Sabbath in Septem-
ber. Rev. E. Forman was elected mod-
erator, and Rev. M. Van Lear temporary
clerk.

Rev. E. W. Price, of Montgomery
Presbytery of Virginia, was invited
as a corresponding member.

Rev. R. H. Kinnard was dismissed to
the Presbytery of Palmyra Presbytery of
Virginia.

The names of Licentiates, J. P. Randolph
and W. H. Goodloe, who had ren-
ounced the jurisdiction of Presbytery,
were ordered to be dropped from the roll
of Presbytery.

Committee on Domestic Missions
was directed to arrange with the Synods
of Virginia for the supply of the supply
of our destitute churches, to report to
the Presbytery at their next meeting the
amount of funds contributed by Presby-
tery for this purpose, and the amount ap-
propriated within our bounds.

Committee on Finance, was directed
to make an assessment on all the churches
within our bounds to liquidate the
Presbytery's indebtedness and to inform
the churches of their assessment, so that
they may send the same to Treasurer of
Presbytery, Rev. W. George, Midway,
Kentucky, before our next fall meeting.

All the churches under care of the Pres-
bytery are to meet on the 1st of June next,
to ascertain the amount of their
ministers' salaries, and to provide
for the ministry under our care.

Committee on Finance, is charged to
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